Pond Creatures

Topic: Water, biology

Objectives: Observe aquatic organisms in water

Grade Level: 4 – 12 (younger students will need adult help collecting samples)

Time: 15 – 20 minutes

Materials: D-net, plastic bucket**,** squeeze bottles**,** shallow plastic trays, petri dishes, basting syringes, plastic spoons, Magiscopes or magnifying lenses, latex gloves, writing pads, pens or pencils

Vocabulary:
organism
mayflies
larva
water striders
planaria
hydra
crayfish
snail

Location: Lake Clara Meer

Background: The living organisms found in a pond can be an indication of the health of the pond. Some types of small aquatic life commonly found in ponds include mayflies, mosquito larva, water striders, planaria, hydras, crayfish and snails. In this activity you will look for small aquatic life in Lake Clara Meer.

Procedure:

1. Collect some lake water in the plastic bucket. Fill the squeeze bottle with some of the lake water.

2. Put the D-net in the water until you feel it reach the bottom of the lake. Gently wiggle or slide the net to disturb the bottom material.

3. Carefully glide the net across the bottom of the disturbed area and then bring the net back up to the surface of the water.

4. Pull the net out of the water. Holding it over a plastic tray, use the squeeze bottle to wash the collected material into the tray.

5. Use the basting syringe or plastic spoons to gently pick out any organisms you see and transfer them with a little of the sample water to a petri dish.

6. Use a magnifying lens or Magiscope to observe any living organisms in the water sample.

Questions to think about and discuss:

1. Describe any organisms you found in your sample. How big are they? What color are they? How do you think they move?
2. What other things do you observe about the organisms in your sample?
3. Make a sketch the organisms you found in your sample. Make your sketch larger than life. Indicate on your drawing the actual size of the organism.
4. Identify each organism if you can. This may require some research back in your classroom or library.